

Applicants submit herewith a Declaration under 37 CFR 1.131, proving that the present invention was conceived prior to the priority date of Demjanenko (November 13, 2000), and that constructive reduction to practice of the invention proceeded with due diligence from a date prior to this priority date up to the date of filing (December 8, 2000) of U.S. Provisional Patent Application 60/254,147, from which the present patent application claims priority. All the claims in the present patent application are supported by the disclosure in this provisional patent application. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that Demjanenko may not be considered prior art against the present patent application. Claims 1, 6-8, 14 and 19-21 are therefore believed to be patentable over the cited references.

Claims 2-5 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Wallace in view of Demjanenko and further in view of one or more of van Nee (U.S. Patent 6,175,550), Levison et al. (U.S. Patent 6,366,938) and Chulajata et al. (U.S. Patent 6,434,375). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. In view of the patentability of independent claims 1 and 14, as explained above, dependent claims 2-5 and 15-18 are also believed to be patentable.

Claims 9-13 and 22-26 were deemed to recite allowable subject matter, but were objected to for depending

from rejected base claims. In view of the patentability of the independent claims in this application, as explained above, Applicants believe this objection should be withdrawn.

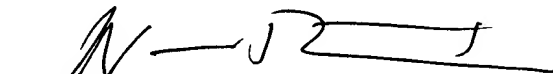
Applicants have studied the additional references made of record by the Examiner, and believe the claims currently pending in the present patent application to be patentable over these additional references, whether the references are taken individually or in any combination.

Applicants believe the remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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